

Council on Greenways & Trails
Trap Pond State Park
August 9, 2006
9:30am

Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m. by Paul Morrill, Council Chairman. Everyone introduced themselves and identified their Council position or agency representation.

John McMillon, Manager, Trap Pond State Park welcomed Council members to the park. He talked about the newly opened trail that extends around the park and the plans for a water spray pool. John introduced William Koth, Park Interpreter who gave a brief history of Trap Pond State Park and summarized park amenities.

March 15, 2006 Meeting Minutes

There were no additions or changes to the March 15, 2005 meeting minutes. Paul Morrill asked for a motion to accept or change the minutes. Jamie Brown moved that the minutes be approved as written, Ms. Lisa Lasher seconded. The motion passed.

Reports

Education & Outreach – Lisa Lasher

Paul Morrill noted that in the 10 years as a Council member, this was the first time Diane Wilson was not present. Lisa Lasher gave a report that Ms. Wilson had prepared.

- *Newsletter* - Susan Moerschel has the following articles for the fall Newsletter: Hunn Property, St. Jones River Greenway; John Smith National Historic Water Trail; and the Woodland Trail at Delaware State University. Susan would like to have an article on New Castle County's Pedestrian Bike Pedestrian Plan. Charles Emerson will provide an article on Pomeroy Trail and Redd Park/Reservoir Trail. Susan has contacted Gary Emory for an article on the Mispillion Riverwalk. .
- *The State Fair* - The display was set up on July 27 and remained until Saturday, July 29th. Paul thanked everyone who staffed the booth. Lisa acknowledged: Susan, Bob Ehemann, Rich Phifer, Jamie Brown, Paul Morrill, Lisa Lasher, Elliott Workman and Brad Killian for staffing the booth. Many people were interested in trail maps. The *Leave No Trace*® cards were not very popular, but we expect to hand them out at the Coast Day event. Diane, Lisa and Susan have discussed updating the display materials for 2007. Fifteen state fair visitors signed up for the Newsletter which can also be found online: <http://www.destateparks.com/greenway/newsletter/news.htm>
- *National Trails Day* on June 3rd was rained out. It rained most of the day so activities were done on a smaller scale or cancelled all together.
- *Coast Day* will be held on October 1, 2006 at the College Marine Studies in Lewes. A sign up sheet was passed around by Lisa Lasher for volunteers.

- *American Discovery Trail* - Lisa said there is a book out, entitled 'Getting to the Point' by Brian Stark whose travels across the country include Delaware.

Grants Committee – Lisa Lasher and Bob Ehemann

Bob Ehemann gave a DTF Grant Program summary which began in 1986. To date 43 parkland acquisitions and park or trail development projects totaling \$6.3 million have been completed. Currently, there are 20 approved active park and greenway/trail projects.

At the October 2005 meeting, some Council members had questions and concerns about how project amendments are granted. As a result of this discussion, the Grant Review Committee (Gail VanGilder, Lisa Lasher, Charlie Emerson, and Joe Cantalupo) met May 2006 with Division staff (Bob Ehemann, Susan Moerschel) to discuss how to administratively handle amendments to previously approved projects.

Several options were evaluated by the Committee. They looked at the history and noted no trend whereby amendments were becoming greater than the new grant project requests. Some years, had no amendments at all. The Committee reviews and recommends new projects to the full Council. The Committee had been briefed on Project Amendments in that the Division grants Amendments contingent upon availability of adequate funds after new projects are assessed and approved.

The Grant Committee concluded that if a phased project needs additional funds, timely amendments should be made, if funding is available. Other elements concluded by the Committee for previously approved projects:

1. New phases will be required to submit new DTF grant applications;
2. Amendment requests less than \$50,000 will be handled administratively, pending available funds, so that the projects are not held up;
3. Projects amendments ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000 will be reviewed by the Grants Committee with a recommendation to the Division. Approval is contingent upon available grant funds; and
4. Amendments above \$100,000 will be reviewed by the Committee with all new project applications and recommendation to the full Council.

Paul Morrill asked for a motion to empower the Grants Committee to meet, review and sign off on behalf of the Council for the mid-range amount of the \$50,000 to \$100,000 grant requests. Jamie Brown moved, Charlie Emerson seconded, based on discussion that the Grants Committee sign off on behalf of the Council for the mid-range portion amount of \$50,000 to \$100,000 grant requests and to inform Council of their actions.

UPDATES

Paul Morrill asked Susan Moerschel to give a status of the Clayton/Easton Rail Trail. Susan said she had talked with Maryland Transportation Authority (MTA) about a lease agreement. It is expected that this year or early next year an agreement will be developed between MTA and Division of Parks & Recreation for the management of the property. The corridor is 14-miles long from Clayton, DE to the border with Maryland. The rail corridor is 44 miles long from Clayton, DE to Easton, MD. The property is owned by the State of Maryland.

State Resource Area (SRA) Maps – Ron Vickers, Division of Parks & Recreation DNREC

Mr. Vickers said since he last met with Council in March, the following had transpired:

- Three workshops were held at the end of April - one in each county.
- A Public meeting was held on May 1st.
- An open public record was published on the internet for a week.
- There have been two Open Space Council Meetings.
- Legislation was passed which attempted to do away with the SRA process but was vetoed by the Governor.
- The SRA process is back on track with the following issues to work on -
 - Answer questions and concerns made by the public, specifically on the process and notification in which the SRA's are reached.
 - In accordance with the Land Protection Act (7 Del. Code, Chapter 75), the law does not require the Open Space Council to give public notifications but to be an advisory to the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control who will in turn make his recommendations to the three counties, New Castle, Kent and Sussex.
 - At the workshops, the concerns addressed, brought about some minor additions and deletions to the SRA maps.
 - Two parts of legislation were passed -
 1. The State is required to notify by letter every property owner who will be directly affected by the SRA maps; and
 2. Allow those individuals who are in an SRA to opt out if they so choose.
 - Secretary Hughes spoke to the Senate and said DNREC would contact and notify in writing, all those property owners, about 14,000, who are in the SRA. Ron anticipates this will generate a lot of response both negative and positive.
 - Ron has been removing from the SRA's those properties that are approved for development and avoiding other parcels that may only include a small portion.
 - The Secretary's order will be released in about a week as a public notice stating his approval of the SRA maps based on legal interpretation. Each county will be given a hard copy of the SRA maps.
 - There is still a great deal of work to be done before the next Open Space Council meeting.

Paul asked about the timing of the transmittals for the counties to be included in the Comprehensive Plans. Ron said he had discussed with Connie Holland of State Planning and technically, the SRA maps should be provided to each county one year before the due dates. New Castle County's Plan is due in January 2007, Kent County is March 2007 and Sussex County is October 2007. Kent County has asked for an extension. Ron said the final results of this whole process is that he will hear from people who do not want to be involved in this process, from people who want to be deleted from SRA maps and from people who want to be involved. The counties decide whether to incorporate the SRA maps as recommended by DNREC Secretary. The SRA maps should be finalized next Wednesday (8/16/06) and mass mailing will begin according to the Secretary's order soon thereafter.

Paul asked what Council could do as a group because Council went on record in March endorsing the first SRA maps. He said it is important that Council go on record today to endorse the final SRA maps.

Jamie Brown said he could only endorse a motion in principle, because final maps were not presented to the Council. Paul offered that it would be safe for Council to endorse SRA boundaries as presented today, because most boundaries will remain intact, with only a few lines being fine tuned. Paul said that maps endorsed by Council in March were “greener” than those presented today.

Paul made a motion that Council supports the SRA maps developed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. The maps we see today are only slightly different than what is the current version that Ron and staff is working on at this time. As a secondary part of the motion, there will be an article, signed by Paul Morrill in the Fall Issue of the Greenways & Trails Newsletter expressing its support. The motion was seconded by Charlie Emerson, motion carried. Bobbi Geier abstained from voting due to her lack of knowledge on the topic. Additionally, an article will be written for the fall Newsletter expressing its support signed by Paul Morrill, Chairman.

Cheapeake & Delaware Canal – Susan Moerschel, Division of Parks & Recreation

Susan distributed a CD of the final report on the C&D Canal Trail Concept Plan. The Plan recommends construction of several trail segments starting with a 16 mile section from Delaware City to Chesapeake City. The costs for engineering and design of Phase 1 are estimated around \$800,000. DelDOT will be providing \$450,000 in Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds, Division of Parks & Recreation \$150,000 and New Castle County will provide \$50,000 for engineering. DNREC will make \$1.3 million available to Delaware City for the trail segment from Route 9 to the Canal. The Corp of Engineers will meet later this month with Congressman Mike Castle’s staff on the engineering and design aspects of the project. \$1 million in State funds are earmarked for construction.

Route 9 Scenic & Historic Highway Designation – Paul Morrill, Council Chairman

Paul said the project was back on track. Delaware Greenways, Inc has completed the first draft of the nomination document and is being circulated to a Working Group for additions. The Working Group will meet on August 23rd and Public workshops are targeted for October with nomination submission by the end of October. Artist Michele Green, a Kent County artist, has done 44 paintings of scenes along Route 9. An Agricultural Museum article titled Route 9x2 will hang until October 30. A second gallery show will display Green’s work at The Station Gallery, Greenville. Green is a supporter of Route 9’s conservation.

NEW REPORTS

Gail VanGilder spoke about her concern of the low number of attendees. Susan said she has since learned that summer was not a good time for meetings and that she would be hesitant to schedule another meeting in the summer. She added that the June meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum. She reported that as of yesterday, we had reached quorum attendance, but had cancellations later in the day. Susan schedules meetings in locations with trail facilities and acknowledged that Trap Pond might have been a far destination for a meeting. There were no Council objections to the meeting site. June, July and August will be avoided as meeting months in the future, unless otherwise requested. Gail specifically was concerned with the lack of Legislative member attendance. Paul said that legislators tend to attend meetings close to their Districts. Members are Reps. Carey and Valihura with a House

member vacancy; and Senators McBride, Venables and Cloutier. Gail specifically is interested in reinstating Senator Liane Sorenson to the Council. Susan stated that legislative representation is appointed by House and Senate leadership and that the Division does not approach leadership about filling vacancies.

Trap-Pond Trail – Susan Moerschel

Susan said the completed project at Trap Pond is 5 miles long with three major bike/pedestrian bridges. Phase 1 costs totaled approximately \$600,000 from State Community Transportation Funds. Phase 2 costs totaled approximately \$1 million – with funding from DelDOT's Transportation Enhancement Program and State Parks Recreational Trails Program. The Trail is a multi-use trail including walking, hiking, cycling and horseback riding. Division staff envisions lengthening trails to increase equestrian opportunities on existing State Park land and through a future land acquisition.

John Smith National Historic Water Trail – Susan Moerschel

Susan referred Council to their packages and reported the National Park Service (NPS) conducted a feasibility study on the creation of a trail that retraces the Chesapeake Bay voyages (1607-1609) of Captain John Smith. DNREC joins many other agencies and organizations seeking national trail designation. Certain criteria must be met in order for the trail to be designated as a National Trail. The NPS report found that the proposed trail met federal criteria. The period for public comment on NPS trail findings closes on August 16, 2006.

NPS will take the comments from the public and depending on whether they are positively or negatively received, make recommendations to Congress on the federal designation. It is imperative that folks speak out in a positive manner declaring trail support. Governor Minner was the earliest supporter of this creation; all of Delaware's Congressional delegations are supporters; Nanticoke Indian Association; Sussex County; Secretary John Hughes; Seaford; Laurel and many other organizations.

A 28 foot open boat called a shallop was built in Chestertown, Maryland and will be the focus of a reenactment starting in May 2007. The shallop will make a trip in the Nanticoke River on May 29 & 30.

Once established, the NPS will manage the trail. The National and Oceanic Administration (NOAA) propose adding a system of multi-purpose buoys along the trail route. They will serve as water-based trail heads; gather water quality, in-stream flow, and aquatic resource data. Each numbered buoy will contain historical information from Captain Smith's voyages. Trail users will be able to call a buoy and retrieve historical interpretative information.

Paul asked if Council could send a letter to the NPS supporting designation of this trail. Jamie Brown made a motion, seconded by Gail VanGilder to express the Council's support for the establishment for the John Smith Trail and for the Chairman to send a letter to NPS giving support with a copy sent to the delegation. Susan will draft a letter for Chairman Morrill's signature.

Susan further reported she has been working with the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources and Dorchester County, MD on the development of a Nanticoke River brochure. It will be a two sided brochure and map depicting the river's history, heritage, cultural and landscape both in the present day and during Smith's era. The brochure gives glimpses of the landscape and the culture that John Smith experienced from his journals.

Paul asked about the possibility of scheduling the May Council meeting in conjunction with the May 29th shallop event. Susan said it could be possible, but Council business would become secondary to all the activities planned that day. The Seaford Chamber of Commerce will be active in this event and the Council on Greenways and Trails would need representation from this Council. Jamie said the Blue Ways Trails has been exploring taking part as well.

Announcements

Susan called the Council's attention to maps in their meeting packets. Trap Pond and Pike Creek area are now posted on the trail website.

Paul requested that a Pomeroy Rail Trail update be on the next meetings agenda.

Charlie Emerson said two weeks ago, New Castle County dedicated a park (a wooded area along White Clay Creek) to Dorothy Miller in Newark whom was well thought of as a wonderful and well deserving individual.

Next Meeting: October 11, 2006 at Fort Delaware, Sanders Room.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm.

Meeting Attendance:

Appointed Members

Charles Emerson
Lisa Lasher
Paul Morrill
Jamie Brown
Gail VanGilder

Agency Members

Bobby Geier – DelDOT, attending for Joe Cantalupo
Ron Vickers – proxy for DNREC

Division of Parks and Recreation Staff

Susan Moerschel
Bob Ehemann
Rose Ryödi
Will Koth
John McMillon